

HB 3237 - S COMM AMD

By Committee on Ways & Means

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the aquatic
4 lands program in the department of natural resources manages over two
5 million acres of state-owned aquatic lands. The legislature further
6 finds that the state faces a diverse and complex set of issues in
7 managing state lands for public access, leasing aquatic lands for
8 commercial purposes, the harvest of geoduck, providing proper
9 stewardship of near-shore areas, cleanup of hazardous materials on
10 aquatic lands, and a number of other issues. The legislature further
11 finds that the funding for these activities largely comes from the
12 revenues generated from the leasing of state aquatic lands and the sale
13 of valuable materials, including geoduck, according to harvest levels
14 set by the department of fish and wildlife. Therefore, the legislature
15 finds that there should be a thorough review of the funding and
16 management of state aquatic lands.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint legislative audit and review
18 committee shall, consistent with chapter 44.28 RCW:

19 (a) Conduct a performance audit of the department of natural
20 resources' aquatic resources program to determine the success of the
21 department in meeting the objectives established in statute for
22 managing aquatic lands;

23 (b) Make recommendations on how to improve the management of
24 aquatic resources program consistent with current policies established
25 in statute;

26 (c) Review harvest levels set by the department of fish and
27 wildlife that regulate management of aquatic resources by the
28 department of natural resources, for consistency with scientifically
29 sound harvest levels;

1 (d) Review management policies to determine if decisions to
2 generate revenues to support the aquatics program are consistent with
3 policies established in statute for managing aquatic lands; and

4 (e) Review the percentage of revenues retained by the department of
5 natural resources from the resource management cost account and the
6 aquatic lands enhancement account for the aquatic resources program to
7 determine if the percentages are appropriate to support the program.

8 (2) The results of the final performance audit and any
9 recommendations shall be reported to the appropriate policy and fiscal
10 committees of the legislature by December 15, 2007."

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11 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "program;" strike the
12 remainder of the title and insert "and creating new sections."

EFFECT: (1) Legislative findings/intent language is revised to clarify geoduck harvest levels are currently set by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). (2) Study language is revised to include a requirement for JLARC to evaluate whether harvest levels set by the DFW for aquatic resources are set in accordance with scientific standards. (3) Study language is also revised to provide for a broader set of recommendations from JLARC, and removes the specific requirement for JLARC to recommend whether the general fund would be a better funding mechanism for management of aquatic lands.

Fiscal impact: No anticipated significant change to the cost of the study.

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